

David Caldwell Letters

S207

1835 and 1838

1folder

Manuscripts & Rare Books Division
Indiana State Library

Finding Aid by: Nikki Stoddard Schofield, May 2013

Biographical Note:

David and his brother Alexander Caldwell wrote to their parents in the county of Londonderry, Ireland, in care of Mr. Robert Fairly Muff in 1835, and in care of Mr. William Moore in 1838. The brothers worked at the Wheeling Iron Works in Virginia (later West Virginia) in November 1835. Alex told his father that he intended to visit Indiana in the spring of 1836 and settle there, if he liked it. Those family members who remained in Ireland were the parents, grandmother, brother John, other unnamed brothers, and one sister. In May 1838, Alexander and his family were living in Indiana where he was a farmer.

Source: Information Found within Collection.

Scope and Content:

The collection consists of three typed pages of letters written by Alexander and David Caldwell to their parents in 1835 and to brother John from David in 1838.

In the 1835 letter, written first by Alex and then by David, they give the price of food, tell about the deaths of Thomas Thompson and his daughter Martha, and mention that they moved from Baltimore, which was a good change.

The 1838 letter relates that Alexander and his family moved to "Moorefield" County, Indiana, where he is farming. It is located six hundred miles down the Ohio River from Wheeling.

David, who was single in July 1838, gives a description of his trip from Wheeling on a steamboat down the Ohio River to Cincinnati, then on a canal boat to Dayton. He took a stage coach to Piquay, and then went to Fort Wayne, Indiana. Getting to Fort Wayne, David wrote: "I traveled where there was nothing but a blazed pathway that is a notch cut on each tree for a directory." Houses were 15 or 20 miles apart. He said that in Fort Wayne, there are half Indian people who called themselves French Americans, and "they are in general lazy." David met the Miami Indian chief, who had a plantation of 600 acres, spoke broken English, and had two wives. David purchased land within four miles of the Indian chief's land.

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Collection Inventory:

Date	
Nov. 1, 1835	Letter to Parents from Alex and David Caldwell
May 23, 1838	Letter to brother John from David Caldwell

Collection Information:

Size of Collection:	1 folder.
Collection Dates:	1835 and 1838
Provenance:	Mrs. W. E. Brown, Jan. 30, 1967
Access:	The Collection is Open for Research Use
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